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DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A/S CARSON, AF/C
NSC FOR MGAVIN
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: ROGUE SAF COLONEL ON DARFUR CEASEFIRE, JEM AGGRESSION

REF: A) KHARTOUM 649

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Well-known Sudanese Liberation Army-Unity (SLA/U) rebel leader and former Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) Colonel Abu Bakr Kado recently abandoned SLA/U to join Sudanese Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW). He is now living in the SLA/AW stronghold of Jebel Marra with approximately 20 fighters, two vehicles and assorted weaponry. Claiming he joined SLA/AW for "freedom," Kado strongly supports a ceasefire in Darfur, and said he and SLA/AW General Commander Gaddura will cooperate with any international effort to bring about a cessation of hostilities to Darfur. He also said he would support international ceasefire monitors, including U.S. personnel. Kado urged the U.S. to impose explicit conditions on the GOS in Darfur to limit the reach of the SAF. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) One of the most intriguing and elusive rebel commanders in Darfur, Abu Bakr Kado, met with poloff on May 13 in Deribat, Jebel Marra to discuss his recent defection from SLA/U to SLA/AW. Until recently the deputy force commander of the now-defunct SLA/U, Kado split with SLA/U General Commander Abdullah Yahia earlier this year after Yahia refused to honor a previous agreement and cede control of the faction to Kado after the latter had spent a year as General Commander. Born in the Nuba Mountains, Kado served as an enlisted officer in the Sudanese Armed Forces, achieving the rank of colonel, until rebelling in 1996 to fight on the side of the opposition National Democratic Alliance in eastern Sudan. In 2003, he joined the ranks of the SLA to lead the uprising in Darfur and achieved a reputation as a brilliant strategist with a ruthless streak. Although implicated in SLA/U attacks on both SAF convoys and UNAMID peacekeepers, no conclusive evidence has emerged to tie him to specific crimes. In April 2009, Kado joined SLA/AW General Commander Gaddura, telling poloff simply, "I fight for freedom." From his headquarters in a run-down building near the Deribat helipad, Kado appeared to command approximately 20 armed fighters. His weaponry included two technicals, two .50 caliber weapons, a host of assorted rocket-propelled grenades and Kalashnikovs, and one 106 mm recoilless anti-tank gun welded to the back of a Land Cruiser.

¶3. (SBU) A veteran of various factions and alignments in Darfur, Kado told poloff he refused to sign on to the Darfur Peace Agreement because he knew the Government of Sudan (GOS) would never agree to implement its agreement with Sudanese Liberation Army/MM leader Minni Minnawi. Kado's decision to join the ranks of SLA/AW is based, he said on the faction's ability to hold defensive positions and still abide by a ceasefire. There also appears to be expediency in his decision: SLA/AW commander Gaddura guaranteed Kado safe passage within Jebel Marra. Kado opined that if the U.S. wants to help bring peace to Darfur, it must impose explicit conditions on the GOS that include the removal of SAF troops from contested areas; disarmament of the Arab militias; and an opening of all roads in Darfur to prevent de-facto blockades of liberated areas. Never an ally of Khalil Ibrahim's Justice and Equality

Movement (JEM), Kado viewed JEM as a Darfur-specific threat. He added he believed that JEM would not attack Omdurman again, but instead would work to carve out a stronghold in Dar Zaghawa in western North Darfur. He does not believe Minni Minnawi's SLA/MM or SLA/U have any remaining military capacity.

14. (SBU) Surprisingly eloquent on the subject of a ceasefire, Kado asked if the international community had any plan for ceasefire implementation, and then proceeded to perspicaciously recommend a mechanism similar to UNAMID's plan for a Mobile Monitoring Team. In addition to demanding qualified monitors from the international community, Kado said that Darfur rebels with SLA/AW would only back a mechanism that had sufficient monitoring capability to inform on rebel and SAF aggression, and report violations in a timely manner. Parties to an agreement would need to include Arab militia leaders, JEM, Darfur-based rebel movements, and the SAF. Optimistic on the possibility of progress in Darfur in the coming months, Kado added, "We hope that the U.S. will be successful in Darfur, and that we can get a Darfur agreement to the point where the CPA is now."

15. (SBU) Comment: Kado provides charisma to an otherwise rudderless SLA/AW. He is an erudite military strategist who has fought and survived battles for more than a decade against the SAF. At a time when many Darfuri mercenaries are heading west to join JEM's coalition of the well-compensated, Kado's union with Gaddura reveals that some remaining rebels in Darfur find JEM's ideology and backing by N'Djamena distasteful. It remains unlikely that JEM and SLA/AW will unite in the near future, but as demonstrated by Kado's changing affiliations, rebel flexibility and pragmatism remain the rule rather than the exception. End comment.

ASQUINO